

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

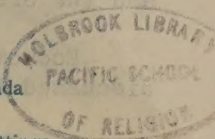
Chairman

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Editors:

Chuzo Yamada

James A. Gittings



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JAPAN CHRISTIAN YEARBOOK BECOMES JOINT CATHOLIC/PROTESTANT PROJECT

The 1968 edition of the 65-year-old Japan Christian Yearbook will for the first time be a joint Catholic/Protestant publication, according to an announcement on November 8 by secretary Chuzo Yamada of the Japan Christian Council. Associated with Editor-in-Chief Hallam C. Shorrock, Jr., Vice President of ICU, in the preparation of the 1968 Yearbook will be Fr. Joseph J. Spae, CICM, Ph. D., a Catholic churchman and editor who is widely known for his work as Director of the Oriens Institute for Religious Research.

The decision regarding the Yearbook is the latest in a series of new ventures of Catholic-Protestant cooperation in Japan. Also under consultation are possibilities for joint erection and operation of a Christian pavilion at the Osaka World Exposition set for 1970.

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR MEETS ON ASIA PROBLEMS

by Helen Post

A Peace in Asia Seminar, held at Oiso Academy House, October 25-27, 1967, drew delegates from Europe, India and the United States.

The Japan Christian Peace Conference, which functions as the Asia Regional Committee for the Prague Christian Peace Conference, sponsored the Seminar. Delegates were invited to "come and hear Japan's point of view on peace in Asia," in preparation for the Prague Conference on the same theme, to be held in March, 1968.

Ten representatives from West Germany, Hungary, India, Czechoslovakia, and the United States were joined by some forty Japanese pastors and laymen.

In the opening lecture, Hiroshi Shishido, Kyodo Press journalist, identified the major source of tension in Asia as the opposition of East and West, namely

the United States and Russia. He focussed primarily on the struggle in Vietnam and the Great Cultural Revolution in China.

Economic development, as a central factor affecting peace in Asia, was discussed by Dr. K. Yamaoka, Waseda University, and Dr. A.K. Thamby, India.

Dr. Thamby said that the poor countries must "set their houses in order," proceed with plans for regional cooperation, and issue a "persistent and united appeal to the enlightened self interest of the rich countries."

"Because the share of any one country or any one group in world trade cannot grow except at the expense of some others, the remedy is to increase the volume of world trade," Dr. Thamby said.

Each lecturer faced a barrage of questions as delegates sought both to clarify the position of the speakers' and express their own convictions with regard to political and economic patterns and the position that responsible Christians and churches must take.

Asked to comment on the situation of the churches in Hungary, Dr. Tibor Bartha said that Christians in East Europe, particularly Protestant Christians, are confronted with communism for the first time in the history of the church.

"This situation," he said, "poses new theological questions that are resulting in a new discovery of the Bible and a new Biblical orientation." Denying that the churches have accommodated themselves to the situation, Dr. Bartha said "you must understand there is a revival of the church and of various congregations, even though you may sometimes hear other voices and opinions."

The closing worship service was conducted by the Russian Orthodox delegation.

Before and after the Oiso Seminar, overseas delegates and Japanese members of the Conference participated in peace meetings in Tokyo and the Kansai.

SEMINARY TUITION HIKE ELICITS OFF-BEAT REACTION

A rise in tuition fees usually signals a student strike in modern Japan, but not at Tokyo Union Theological Seminary. Informed recently that their costs would rise, would-be ministers at Tokyo Union applauded the news on grounds that professors and other institutional staff required pay increases to meet the spiralling cost-of-living in the Japanese capital. Matching actions with words, the seminarians offered to waive the customary ruling in Japanese schools that exempts students already enrolled from tuition increases during the period they remain in a college or university.

Commenting on the TUTS students' departure from customary student behaviour, a columnist in Tokyo's Christ Weekly remarked that "by this act" the future ministers "have indeed passed their ministerial test".

TOKYO EDITOR LAMENTS DECLINE IN NUMBER OF MISSIONARY TEACHERS

Churches in the West are failing to provide English-teaching missionaries for Japan at the very time when the demand for them is at an all-time high, according to the editor of the Japan Christian Quarterly. The Autumn issue of the Quarterly devotes its columns to a series of articles on English-teaching as a missionary vocation.

Editor Philip Williams, a professor of English literature at Tohoku Gakuin, Sendai, says that Church-related schools have been the pioneers in the teaching of English in Japan since the Meiji period. Now that the schools receive fewer and fewer missionaries, although requests for them keep increasing, Williams feels that "a witness that has been vital to the Christian community in this country is being lost by default."

The Japan Christian Quarterly's editor sees evidences of a surge of interest in learning English in the fact that the "New Religious" offer English classes to members and inquirers, in the development of a plan to train 10,000 Japanese mothers to instruct primary children in the language, and in the record number of students now enrolled in commercially-operated English classes. Professor Williams attributes the drop in the number of English-teaching missionaries to reduced overseas budgets of Western churches, changes in assignment procedures, and preferences for "new ministries" over established fields of service. He voices the hope that "we are not yet inevitably driven to witness the death of the missionary English-teaching program in Japan."

GRAHAM CRUSADE SUCCESSFUL BUT NOT SMASH HIT

The executive committee of the Billy Graham International Crusade in Tokyo has announced that total attendance during the 10-day crusade at Nippon Budokan Hall and Korakuen stadium was 207,750. Some 15,854 signified "decisions for Christ" by answering the altar calls that concluded each service.

Of meetings during the October 20-29 period of the crusade, the meeting of October 28 was singled-out by the committee for special mention. Approximately 3,000 persons were unable to enter the 15,000-seat Budokan (Military Arts) Hall on that evening, and remained outside listening to the proceedings through loudspeakers. A final crusade gathering drew 40,000 to Korakuen stadium.

Billy Graham left Tokyo for the United States on October 29. Before departure he announced plans for an Asian Congress on Evangelism to be held on November 4-12, 1968 at Singapore. According to Dr. Graham the new conference will bring together 800 delegates from countrreis in Asia and Oceania.

Crusade proceedings in Japan were marred by two attacks upon the American evangelist and his methods. One, utilizing quoted material from a speech by South Carolina fundamentalist Dr. Bob Jones, Jr., assailed Dr. Graham for his "compromise" with liberals. The other, a poorly written but dramatic protest from a Christian Peace Group, denied the propriety of American evangelistic-style campaigns while the Vietnam War rages. Both criticisms were given wide distribution through the Japanese mails.

DAY OF STUDY AND PRAYER FOR VIETNAM SLATED AT ICU

A "Day of Study and Prayer" for persons concerned about the Vietnam war has been scheduled for December 3 at Seavury chapel, on the campus of International Christian University, Mitaka, Tokyo. Convened by a Vietnam Study Group of American teachers and missionaries, the Day of Study and Prayer will include address by Hallam C. Shorrock, Jr., James Philipps, Sam H. Franklin, Robert Blood, Carl Beck and other Christian figures.

An announcement states that the meeting, though primarily for Americans concerned with US Government policies in Vietnam, will be open to all who are interested in the issues to be discussed. The Day of Study and Prayer will begin at 9:00 a.m.

PUBLICATION OF NEW HYMNAL MARKED IN JAPAN

Special concerts will be performed in Tokyo and Osaka on the occasion of the publication of a new Japanese hymnal, which includes not only hymns suitable for worship services but also songs and choir numbers suitable for many other occasions.

In Tokyo, a combined choir from Tokyo churches will sing at the Toshi Center Hall, Akasaka-Mitsuke, on Sunday, November 26, 1:30 to 4:00. The Osaka concert will take place on Sunday, November 19, at Osaka Jogakuin, beginning at 1:00.

Edited by the Hymnal Committee of the United Church of Christ in Japan and published by the United Church Board of Publication, Hymnal II is designed for church youth groups, for use in the family and at work, and at various kinds of school functions. Chairman of the Kyodan Hymnal Committee is Rev. Masanao Fujita. Rev. Keisuke Soma is chairman of the Tokyo Kyoku Hymnal Committee, which is cooperating in sponsoring the Tokyo concert.

In addition to seven bunku (sub-district) choirs, choirs from Tokyo Woman's college, Joshi Gakuin and Seigakuin, and the Aoyama Gakuin Oratorio Society will participate in the Tokyo program.

CENTER FOR SEMINARS OPENS IN KYOTO

A new Kansai Seminar House in Kyoto, designed to promote dialogue between persons of different professions, religions and countries, was opened officially Friday, October 20, 1967.

One hundred-fifty church and business leaders and foreign guests attended the ceremonies, held at the site of the new building at the foot of Mount Hiei in the Shugakuin area.

The Seminar House has dining and overnight accommodations for 100 guests as well as an Assembly Hall, reading room, conference room, and meeting rooms.

Sponsor of the Kansai Seminar House is the Nippon Christian Academy which established the Oiso Academy House in 1963. Dr. Morizo Ishidate, Tokyo, is chairman of the Nippon Christian Academy Board of Directors. Executive Director of Kansai Christian Academy is Dr. Masao Takenaka. Rev. Moriatsu Murayama is director of the new Seminar House.

At the Opening, Dr. Eberhard Mueller, Director of the Association of Evangelical Academies in Germany, gave the background of the Academy Movement, which began in Germany after World War II.

Declaring that industrialization creates separation and specialization among men but also makes them more dependent upon the skills and knowledge of one another, Dr. Mueller said the Academy serves as a place where individuals and groups can learn the art of dialogue which modern society demands.

This involves not only sensitive thinking and precise verbalizing but also mutual acceptance and sacrifice, Dr. Mueller said.

The Academy Movement first came to the notice of Japan through the Swiss theologian, Dr. Emil Brunner, who taught here from 1952-1954. In 1957 Rev. Dr. Alfred Schmidt, former director of the Evangelische Akademie in Berlin-Brandenburg, came to Japan to encourage the development of the movement.